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R E A S O N S
FOR ESTABLISHING A
SEA BATHING INFIRMARY,

ON THE WESTERN COAST,
FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE POOR:

ADDRESSED TO

The GOVERNORS OF MEDICAL CHARITIES,

TO THE POOR LAW GUARDIANS,

AND

TO THE FRIENDS OF THE POOR,

IN GENERAL,

RESIDENT IN NORTH WALES, CHESHIRE, LANCASHIRE,

AND THE WEST-RIDING OF YORKSHIRE;

WITH AN

A P P E N D I X ,

Containing the opinions of various eminent Medical authorities.

BY J. K. WALKER, M.D.

SENIOR PHYSICIAN OF THE HUDDERSFIELD INFIRMARY.

"Call the Poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind, for they cannot
"recompense thee." Luke xiv. 13, 14.

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HUDDERSFIELD INFIRMARY,

JUNE 26, 1840.

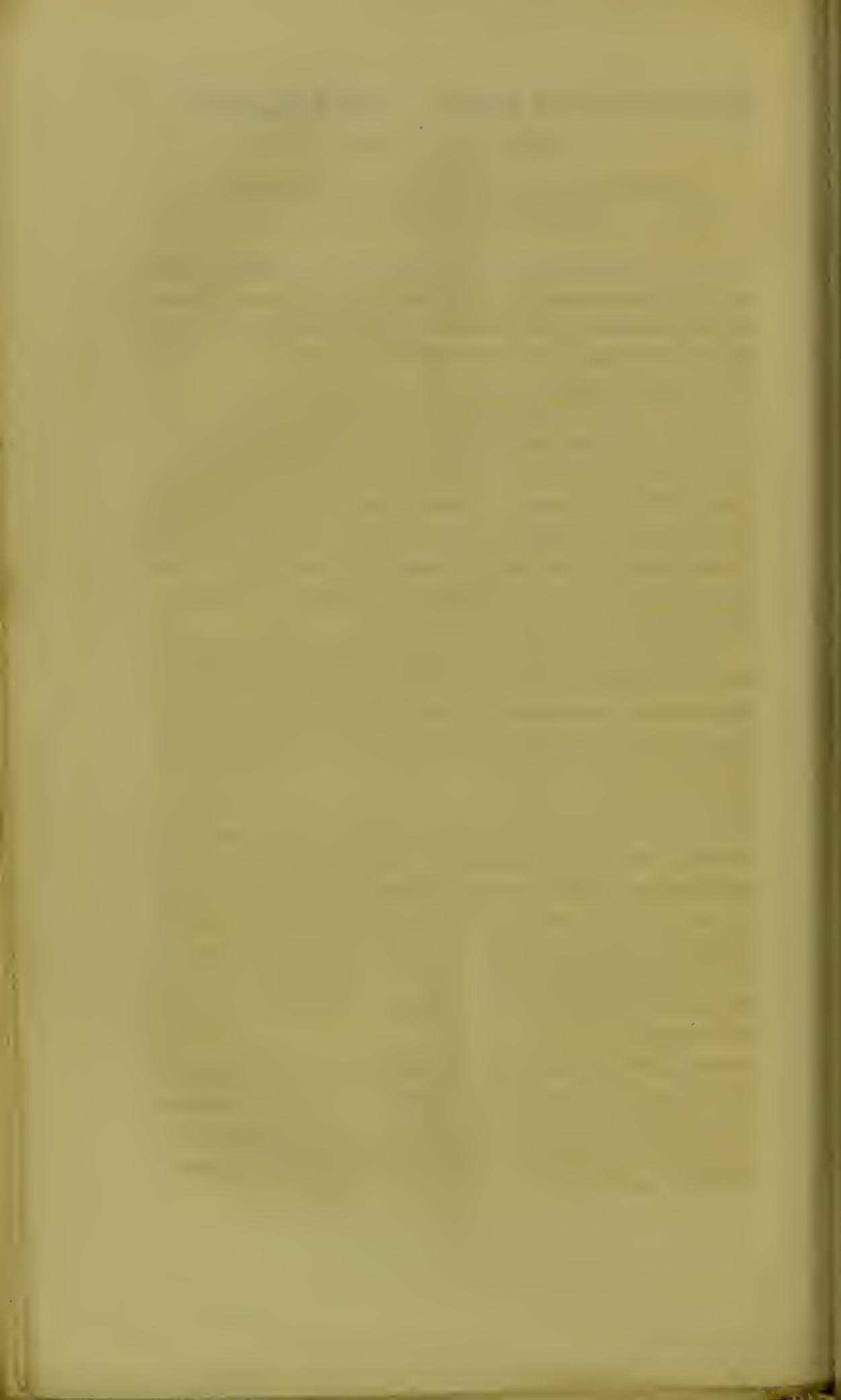
JOSEPH ARMITAGE, ESQ., CHAIRMAN.

The following statement being laid before the Annual Meeting of the Governors of the Infirmary, by the Medical Officers of the Institution, and confirmed by the testimony of other Medical Gentlemen attached to different Infirmaries in Lancashire and Yorkshire, viz :—

“ That a very considerable proportion of Patients are
“ annually admitted whose cases would derive benefit from sea
“ air or sea bathing, which it is not in their power to obtain,
“ and that not only would a degree of benefit unattainable by
“ other means be effected by a sea bathing Infirmary, but in
“ many cases an actual saving, inasmuch as the description of
“ cases relieved by sea air or bathing is usually of the most
“ tedious and expensive kind.”

It was unanimously resolved on the motion of Dr. Walker, seconded by Mr. Robinson, that this Meeting recommends this subject to the consideration of the friends of the poor, in the hope that the knowledge of the facts above alluded to, will awaken the zeal and benevolence of the affluent portion of the community, and lead to the establishment of a sea bathing Infirmary in some convenient part of the western coast, not doubting, that if once established, it will meet with such support from individuals, parochial unions, hospitals, and other sources, as will ensure its success, and render it an efficient instrument, under Providence, of relief to that large class of diseased poor, who at present, for want of such aid, go unrelieved, and become too often a burden to themselves and to their friends.

Also on the motion of W. W. Battye, Esq. seconded by Mr. Joshua Lockwood, that the Medical Officers be requested to correspond with the Medical Officers of other Infirmaries, and confer upon the best mode of carrying the above recommendation into effect.



PURPOSES
OF A
SEA BATHING INFIRMARY,
ON THE
WESTERN COAST.

THE necessity of an establishment to extend the advantages of sea bathing to the poor, has long been felt by medical men, who are conversant with the diseases of the working classes. It is well known to those who are connected with our medical charities, that the poor are peculiarly exposed to certain varieties of disease most speedily and effectually relieved by a residence on the sea coast. To some the use of warm sea water baths may be necessary, to others bathing in the open sea, or even sea air alone may be sufficient. To the poor however these benefits are unattainable. There can be no doubt, that many lives are annually sacrificed, which in all probability might be prolonged by the aid of a Sea Bathing Infirmary, and many a limb which under existing circumstances is lost, might be saved, and many a cripple have the free use of his extremities restored. Those who have in any degree attended to the afflictions of their indigent fellow-creatures in the crowded population of a manufacturing district, must have

observed, with feelings of regret, how many have been dragging on a miserable existence from the destructive ravages of scrofula on the constitution, the effects of which are heightened by want of proper food, clothing, and cleanliness.

The experience of medical men of the first rank in their profession, founded on an extensive practice in hospitals, as well as among the higher orders of society, proves that medicine can effect but little in this distressing complaint. The salutary change however in such patients, which often follows a few weeks residence on the coast, after all other means have failed, sufficiently proves what might be effected by a more extensive application of this mode of treatment, to the poor as well as to the rich.

The numerous places on the coast, that now, at each returning summer, vie with each other in tempting the invalid of the interior to try the efficacy of sea air and sea bathing, are solid and convincing proofs of the importance of the offered remedy.

The object of the present appeal is to secure to the poor, those benefits which are now almost exclusively enjoyed by the more wealthy. If with all the surrounding comforts of life, maladies baffle the earliest and most judicious exertions of medical skill, how wretched must be the condition of the poor, under the pressure of disease, without the prospect of obtaining the remedy most calculated to give relief. Can there be a doubt about the expediency of promoting the establishment of a Sea Bathing Infirmary,

where the poor may enjoy, under medical superintendence, the use of sea water bathing, with such other auxiliary treatment as may be deemed advisable?

It is true that by the aid of private benevolence a small proportion of the sick poor are annually furnished with the means of visiting the sea coast in the summer months, not merely from the interior of Lancashire, but from the West-riding of Yorkshire. Some indeed are relieved by the salubrious effects of sea air and bathing, but with respect to others, especially such as require medical superintendence in the management of their diet, medicine, and bathing, their scanty means are inadequate, and no wonder, under such circumstances, that they return too often unrelieved. Besides many are not in a fit state to venture upon immersion in the open sea. To some a warm sea water bath is beneficial, to whom immersion in the open sea would have been hazardous. There are certain cases of chronic contractions, of rheumatism, and of spinal disease, in which the use of Douche baths is more immediately applicable, others where a shower or vapour bath may be more proper. Yet unaided by charity, how is the poor man to pay for any of these advantages? But by establishing a Sea Bathing Infirmary, we at once supply the means, and put it in the power of every poor man whose case requires it, to obtain this privilege. The experience of practitioners most conversant with the effects of sea bathing has given us latterly a

more correct and clearer insight into its real value as a remedial agent in different forms of disease. It seems that among the most striking instances of the power of sea water over disease, are to be found cases of scrofula in all its endless modifications. Such cases are usually slow in their progress, and the longer the disease has lasted, the more slow that progress will usually be, and when, as is often the case, the bones and joints are affected, the structure and connection of these important parts present peculiar obstacles to recovery. Now it is in this class of cases, that a sea bathing institution offers peculiar advantages to the poor sufferer, for he there has the benefit of sea water at such a temperature, and in such a manner as his medical advisers direct, and as might be expected under such favourable circumstances, the most unpromising symptoms have undergone a salutary change. The reports of the medical officers of the Margate charity, bear frequent testimony to the gratifying results experienced in cutaneous diseases, of which a considerable number are annually relieved by warm sea water baths, and even paralytic affections have in many instances been relieved, and in some entirely removed by its use. There are other instances of patients who have lost the use of their limbs from long continued rheumatism, to whom a warm sea water bath has proved most beneficial. To some indeed warm bathing only is safe, especially where there is a doubt of the strength being sufficient to react after cold immersion. Now in all these cases,

it is not simply the exhibition of sea water, in every known mode of application, that is so beneficial, but the additional advantage of airy, clean, and well furnished wards, wholesome provisions, and proper medical treatment, with a variety of nameless comforts, not to be attained by a poor man, yet so important, as that the want of them will often mar the success of the best treatment.

It is rather singular, with so many places on the coast resorted to for sea air and bathing, that Margate should be the only place, where an Infirmary is open for in-patients. But who can reflect on the multiplied blessings, which that noble institution has for so many years bestowed on the sick poor, without lamenting that in a country, whose glory it is to make such bountiful provision for almost all forms of distress, no similar establishment has yet been founded on the western coast, for the benefit of the manufacturing districts of Lancashire and Yorkshire? It has indeed been the practice in various parts of the western coast to send patients to the sea-side during summer months. At the Denbigh Infirmary (North Wales) they are in the habit of recommending proper objects to Rhyl for the benefit of sea air and bathing. At the Chester Infirmary it has sometimes been the custom to subscribe a sum of money from the general fund of the charity (towards the maintenance of such cases, as it was supposed, would derive benefit from sea air,) in support of a small institution at Parkgate,

situated in the Delta of the Dee, about 12 miles from Chester. There are several subscribers, and a very moderate subscription enables them to send patients for a few weeks in the summer months to that bathing place, and in most instances the result has been highly satisfactory. But I would especially invite the attention of the profession to that very unpretending, yet very useful institution at Southport, called the Strangers' Charity, for the relief of poor sick persons to whose recovery sea air or bathing may be conducive, and who bring a recommendation from a subscriber, and a certificate from a medical practitioner. Each patient staying three weeks, costs the Charity on an average, 24s., including the use of the warm and cold baths, medicine, &c. Every subscriber of one guinea a year is entitled to send one patient for three weeks, who has the gratuitous attendance of a medical man—such medicines as may be requisite, and the use of either warm or cold sea baths. But in addition to this, each patient has seven shillings a week allowed, for the purpose of procuring food and lodging. The lodging houses are under the surveillance of the officers of the Charity, and each patient pays half-a-crown a week for his accommodation. This institution has proved a great blessing to many of the sick poor of Lancashire, of whom between three and four hundred are annually made par-

takers of its advantages. Mr. Longton, the senior medical officer, informs me that the cases most benefited at the Southport Charity, are scrofula, rheumatism, disordered digestion, and chronic complaints of all sorts. No register of cases is kept, as the patients can only remain on the books three weeks upon one recommendation —a neat pile of buildings for a Dispensary and Bath was erected in 1823, at a cost of £449 5s. 11d.—Its management reflects great credit on the medical officers. The Southport Strangers' Charity however may be regarded as a Sea Bathing Dispensary, and is admirably calculated for the relief of that class of patients, that stand more in need of salt water bathing, and the bracing breeze of the sea coast, than of medical treatment, and as such may often be as well relieved by occasional attendance at the Charity as out-patients, as by admission to the wards of an Infirmary. In the Southport Charity there is a resolution, "That no scrofulous cases of long standing, will be admitted between the months of May and September." Now it will be seen by a reference to the reports of the Margate Sea Bathing Infirmary, that it is amongst this class of patients, that the greatest relief has been given by a residence within its walls. Were an Infirmary formed for the reception of in-patients, such exclusion during the summer

months, when sea air and bathing are most useful, would no longer be necessary.

The object of a Sea Bathing Infirmary is to give relief to all such poor patients as are properly recommended, without any exclusion, admitting within its walls only such as require daily professional superintendence, a just adaptation of diet, medicine, and bathing, and such other comforts and conveniences as cannot be obtained at a private dwelling, and under the head of out-patients, including such as can be equally as well relieved by the use of the baths, and by occasional attendance at the infirmary for advice and medicine. That the number of cases of the former description will always be great, is evident from the annual return of the Margate institution, where indeed the number of applicants for admission as inpatients is annually increasing, and where even private practitioners *send patients of a higher grade, from a sense of the superior advantages to be derived from a residence within its walls, to what can be found in private lodgings.*

The Sea Bathing Infirmary at Margate has now existed for more than 40 years, during which it has imparted the greatest benefits to the diseased poor of London, and its populous environs. It has become what its benevolent founders intended, an admirable support and supplement to the London Hospitals, and an

almost indispensable link in the mighty chain of our eleemosynary establishments for the sick poor, in and near the metropolis. No less than 15,000 patients have been admitted since its establishment. At present it contains 215 beds, and the annual expenditure is about £2400; of this sum, no less than £1183 is paid by parochial unions and hospitals, that contract for beds for the season. So great indeed has been its success, that many practitioners are in the habit of sending private patients there, a system calculated it is true, to aid the funds of the charity, but which cannot, I conceive, be carried to any great extent without interfering with the primary object of the institution, viz., the relief of proper objects among the poorer class of society. The institution is open for the reception of patients from the second week in May, until the last week in October, and closed during the rest of the year. It is impossible to do more than allude to the numerous gratifying results which have attended this excellent institution. It may be sufficient to make a short extract or two from the medical reports, written and signed by professional men of the highest character, which bear the following testimony to some of the benefits it has produced.

“That by the benefit which it has afforded to the sick poor, in the probable saving of limbs, by subduing the most pressing diseases of the

joints, in conquering certain forms of inflammation of the eyes, which had resisted former endeavours, and threatened permanent blindness, in healing obstinate, weakening, and distressing sores, in restoring and removing the evils attendant on indurated glands in various parts, in restoring health and vigour from conditions of body the most emaciated and deplorable, in altering to all appearance constitutions, where striking characters of strong scrofulous disposition had been manifest, and in preserving the lives of persons seemingly at the brink of death, it has exceeded the promise and declared expectation of its founders."

We have here a concise recapitulation of the results of a single year, and similar evidence on the part of the medical inspectors, will be found in the annual reports of each succeeding year.

I am informed by Dr. Canham, the senior Physician, that at the present time, *about one-fourth of the in-patients are children*, principally cases of scrofula in some of its forms, and how gratifying is it to find, that so large a proportion of these cases are usually relieved, and so many poor children rendered "comparatively healthy and useful members of society, who otherwise might have fallen victims to disease." Now if there is one plea more forcible than another in favour of this institution, it surely will be this fact, that helpless children are the principal objects of relief, and a sickly offspring, who from want of it, might become burthensome members through life, may by the aid

of such an institution, be rendered healthy, strong, and useful.

In another report we find the following concluding paragraph, "Some of the hospitals, and many practitioners in extensive private practice, are becoming in the habit of sending ~~scrofula~~^{and} diseases of the worst form to this institution, and we cannot but congratulate the governors, that the medical profession has become so sensible of the importance of the establishment, and *so active in taking advantage* of the benefit which it affords. In fact the objects of the institution are invaluable, rescuing life, and curing and palliating disease under circumstances which would be otherwise wholly desperate."

Such are the claims which the establishment at Margate has to public patronage and support. With such evidence before us, can we hesitate in following so noble an example, by providing on the western coast a similar institution for the benefit of the poor of the adjacent counties? What friend to humanity will refuse to join in this enterprise of christian charity, which promises so rich a harvest of blessings to the sick poor, of whom so many fall victims to disease, or are doomed to linger out a wretched existence, for want of such aid? I am truly gratified to find that the Scarborough Sea Bathing Infirmary, which has for many years been extensively useful in the relief of out-patients, is at length about to increase the sphere of its operations and make provision for twelve in-patients. Such are the proposals contained in the late pros-

pectus.* But even were that number increased, it can never be made to answer, in all respects, without the aid of a second institution on the western coast, and it is extremely doubtful, when the benefits of these marine establishments become more generally known and felt, whether in a few years even two institutions of the kind would be sufficient for the the whole of this part of the kingdom, so rapid is the increase of population in the manufacturing districts. Indeed with the advantages of our insular situation, and of so many convenient places on the coast, one would have expected from the known character of our countrymen, long before this, such a blessing provided for the poor in every suitable situation around our enlightened and highly favoured isle, offering itself to the benevolent hand of charity for its support.

* My plan embraces both coasts. If it be generally admitted that the Scarborough establishment is too small to extend its benefits to the numerous poor objects of Lancashire, who besides are more conveniently situated for the western coast, it is no less true, that a much larger institution on the western coast would have as many applicants as could be accommodated, from the manufacturing districts of Lancashire and the West-Riding of Yorkshire alone, without receiving a single patient from other parts of Yorkshire. The Scarborough institution with 50 beds, might for a time be sufficient for the North and East-Ridings, with other parts of the north, while that on the western coast, with 100 beds, would be able to receive objects from Lancashire, Cheshire, and the West-Riding. Both however should be open, not four, but six months in the year.

But it should silence all further objections, now that the voice of the medical profession has been so generally expressed in favour of a marine infirmary, under a full assurance that whatever difficulties it may for a time sustain, the experience of its merits will eventually overcome them all. And this expression of opinion is not partial or confined to a few localities, but throughout the whole of the manufacturing districts of Yorkshire and Lancashire, as well as Cheshire, the same opinion has prevailed, all concurring in the desirableness of such an institution, as one, which is calculated *to relieve our local charities*, and impart a degree of aid, which experience has shewn to be more efficacious in a certain description of cases, than any other yet known to the profession. And that I may not appear to some to be advancing opinions uncountenanced by my medical brethren in other towns, I most earnestly entreat an attentive perusal of the letters I shall submit to their notice, written by medical practitioners, and chiefly from such as are resident in those localities, where the benefit of our new institution would be principally felt—and though among so many, to whom I am indebted for their ready support on this occasion, it is difficult to make a proper selection, yet it will probably be the most satisfactory to choose one or two such communications from each locality, so as to give us by these means the opportunity of judging what degree of co-operation we may expect between parts remotely situated from each other.—(Vide letters annexed.)

But if still further evidence is necessary, it will be found in the names of those medical men, who support the Margate Sea Bathing Institution, who have watched over its progress, and witnessed its usefulness, and who had there been any ground of doubt upon the subject, would not have allowed their names to appear in attestation of its merits. When we find among the medical board, such names as Sir Astley Cooper, Bart., Benjamin Travers, Esq., and Sir B. C. Brodie, Bart., along with many other professional men of scarcely less eminence, who can doubt of the intrinsic merits and excellence of a medical charity, which has received the support of individuals, who deservedly stand at the head of their profession?

What further argument need I adduce? I have shown from the first medical authorities of the provinces, as well as in the metropolis, that such a measure is calculated to rescue numbers of the industrious poor from the destructive effects of scrofulous and many other disorders, to which from their confined dwellings, and defective nutriment, they are peculiarly obnoxious, and thus to improve the race of the labouring part of the community, and preserve to the state many valuable lives—I have shewn that this opinion is verified in the annual examination of cases at the Margate Infirmary, and therefore I feel that I am doing no more than my duty in recommending a similar measure

for the benefit of the poor of the manufacturing districts of Yorkshire and Lancashire. If it were some untried scheme that we were called upon to adopt, benevolence might pause e'er it lent its aid, but here we have a scheme of relief, founded on experience, sanctioned by the united voice of the profession, and one moreover which is calculated to lighten the burthen of our local charities, and effect a degree of good for which no one has yet found an adequate substitute.

It may be regarded perhaps as premature to enter into any discussion on the respective pretensions of the various places selected by different individuals as proper for such an establishment. It will be seen by a reference to the medical opinions I have laid before my readers, that the profession are as much divided on that point as the public at large. The neighbourhood of Crosby, of Southport, of Lytham, and of Blackpool, have each in their turn, found eager advocates—and it is probable that very suitable sites might be found in the vicinity of all these towns. But allow me to say, that before any proper opinion can be given on this point, many circumstances must be enquired into, and much information, which we do not possess, will be necessary relating to matters of the highest importance. It will be for a select committee to examine minutely into every point, and collect such evidence as may lead to a right decision.

It is undoubtedly of great importance that such a site should be selected as may allow easy access to every part of the manufacturing district. In this respect, none of the above places will, I apprehend, be objectionable except perhaps Lytham, which is less conveniently situated. Blackpool however is now brought within easy communication with the manufacturing districts, by the opening of the Preston and Fleetwood railroad. And Southport on the opposite side of the estuary of the Ribble, has decided advantages to a poor man, from the facility and cheapness of the water communication to Scarisbrick, from all parts of the interior. There is every reason to expect therefore that no impediment will arise from this cause, whatever part of the western coast is selected for the institution. The *facility of obtaining land* in the neighbourhood of each of the above towns, is another consideration of primary importance, and one which must, *cæteris paribus*, have a material influence in directing our choice. But there is yet another point to a medical man, of the highest importance, which relates to peculiarities of a meteorological kind. This information would be of easy attainment, were a regular meteorological register kept at each of these places, which unfortunately is not the case. For want of this, we have no means of ascertaining either the mean monthly and annual

quantities of rain in each place, nor the state of the atmosphere which generally prevails at certain seasons of the year, whether as regards humidity or temperature. It is true that all these places are situate on the western coast, and at no considerable distance from each other, yet experience tells us, there may nevertheless be a very important difference in many particulars relating to the average quantity of rain, dryness and temperature of the air, as well as time of high-water. It has been urged as an objection to Blackpool, that the exposed nature of its situation has rendered it occasionally cold and bleak in wet seasons to a greater degree than in more sheltered spots. This of course will form a necessary subject of enquiry. The difference, if any, in the strength of the sea water, has also been alluded to, a subject which I have not overlooked, but after a careful examination of specimens of sea water sent to me from Blackpool, Southport, and Crosby, there really appears no appretable difference, for even the Crosby sea water, which from its greater vicinity to the river might be supposed to have lost a portion of its strength from dilution, seems to yield almost the same weight of saline contents as the other two. Those who object to Southport because the sand is apt to prove a source of annoyance in dry or windy weather, should remember that it is to these very sandhills, on

the shore of an open western sea, that is mainly owing the advantage of the soft breezes, that add to the salubrity of the place. It may be worth while also, to ascertain whether good water can be obtained, for culinary and other purposes, as the contrary is sometimes the case, and the brackish taste of the water in ordinary use is no uncommon subject of complaint.

It is not always easy to compute with accuracy the possible cost of such a building as is now required. Yet there is scarcely a town of any magnitude in the kingdom, that has not with the aid of the surrounding district, raised a sum sufficient to erect an Infirmary. Can there be the smallest difficulty therefore, in this seat and centre of our commercial greatness, where vast sums are raised with such ease for other purposes, in raising a sum so comparatively small, as would be required to erect a Sea Infirmary? When has the cry of distress been allowed to plead in vain, and among all our numerous hospitals for the relief of the poor, which of them has closed its doors for want of support? And yet numerous as are our institutions, none of them can afford a substitute for the Charity I am now proposing. How lightly would it fall upon each district, if the united affluence of those counties, or at least such parts of Lancashire, Cheshire, and the West-Riding of Yorkshire, as are likely to be benefited by this plan, contributed its fair proportion. Perhaps no other portion of the globe of equal dimensions can display such a vast amount of wealth, as is

contained in the manufacturing districts of the counties above mentioned. If its opulence then be great, so let its munificence be also. Let its pretensions be based on a higher pedestal, and let it be said of it also, that no portion of the globe can boast so many noble institutions for the relief of human suffering—and what more appropriate mode of signalizing their gratitude to the Giver of all good for all His blessings, than a Marine Bethesda for the relief of the poor, who are the sinews of our wealth, erected on the borders of that ocean, at once the glory and safeguard of our nation—of that ocean, that wafts to the furthest parts of the earth the fruits of our industry, and on whose bosom are brought back those riches and that traffic, that have raised both Lancashire and Yorkshire to their present unparalleled pitch of commercial greatness?

There will always be found individuals timid or lukewarm enough to cast a doubt upon every scheme of philanthropy. There never was a charitable institution achieved without difficulties, but have they not always vanished, and will vanish in the present instance, like the early dew, before the beams of Christian beneficence. The first difficulty overcome, viz. that of providing a suitable building,* no other

* There are few Infirmarys in the kingdom indeed, which have not required enlargement from time to time, with very great loss and much expense, most of which might have been saved, had their funds permitted them to erect their edifice on a more perfect scale, at the commencement. It would be

would arise in its future support. The expense of maintaining such a Charity would not be so great as some might suppose, as it would not be open more than six or seven months in the year, probably from the beginning of May to the end of October. Let us suppose that accommodation were afforded only for a hundred *in-patients*, (taking the Margate Charity as a precedent, where the average stay of patients in the Infirmary is rather more than three months) probably about 200 in-patients with perhaps twice the number of out-patients would annually be admitted.*

I have already stated that the annual expenditure of the Margate Charity (open six months in the year) amounts to about £2,400 for the support of 200 beds — *of this sum nearly a moiety is defrayed by parochial unions and hospitals contracting for beds for the season, and the remainder by private contributions.* Supposing therefore that we make a liberal allowance, and estimate the expense of an Infirmary such as I am advocating, capable of holding 100 beds, at

desirable to adopt such a plan, as may freely admit of addition or modification, if necessary, without impairing the symmetry of the edifice.

* It is computed that a Marine Infirmary capable of holding 100 beds, might be erected for 7 or £8,000, or even a smaller sum. There were many who doubted, whether the town and neighbourhood of Huddersfield would ever obtain contributions for erecting a local Infirmary. But what has been the result ? A sum *more than enough* was raised to erect an Infirmary, which has already been, and I trust will long continue to be, a blessing to the poor of the surrounding district.

£2,000 a-year. Is this a sum to appal one of the most opulent communities in the world? Such a sum would, I conceive, be readily raised from various sources. It would partly be obtained in the form of annual subscriptions, and a considerable portion would be defrayed by different hospitals and unions, contracting for beds for the season, as is the case at Margate, where all hospitals, parishes, and other public institutions pay £5 for a bed for the season. This sum however does not include the board, which is paid for in addition, upon terms of 6s. a week for those above ten years of age, and 4s. a week for children. It is supposed also that a considerable source of revenue would arise from congregational collections in different places of worship. It is a question too, (which however would depend upon the size of the building) whether admission might not be given to a class of persons, who are not exactly objects of charity, to whom the charges might be moderate, but yet such as would leave some surplus for the benefit of the Institution. There is reason to believe, that many of the middle classes would gladly avail themselves of such accommodation, and thus materially contribute towards carrying on the benevolent object of the Institution.

Many other circumstances might be adduced to shew, both that a Sea Infirmary is most desirable, as well as most easy to be supported, but those I have already brought forward in the preceding pages, will, I hope, be sufficient to convince the most sceptical

on these points. I do not make my appeal to the benevolent of a single town, or a single district. I do not call upon such to sustain the whole pressure of the burden, and by its unassisted efforts to erect and maintain a Sea Infirmary, but I call upon each and all unitedly, by motives of policy, by the sweeter suggestions of humanity, and by the still more holy precepts of our common christianity, to share in the great work, and to co-operate with other portions of this vast manufacturing district, in raising a House of Mercy for the benefit of our poorer brethren.

In this roll of humanity no matter whose names shall first appear, no matter which town or district shall strive for pre-eminence in this labour of love. If the flame of Charity be once lighted up, it is of small consequence where the spark is first kindled, but it is of the highest consequence and concerns all who bear the name of Christians to act up to their high calling, and cast away the reproach, which must attach to all such, as after they are once acquainted with the evil, shall coldly refuse to participate in its relief. To our nobility and gentry, to our merchants and manufacturers, to the benevolent of both sexes I appeal. If they cannot bid the lame walk or the blind see, yet the silver and the gold is theirs to give, and I entreat them to throw their gifts into this newly opened treasury for the relief of that species of malady, so com-

mon among the poor of our land, for which hitherto no adequate provision is made. And now that I have acquitted my conscience in this respect, I will leave this cause in the hands of a benevolent public, anxious indeed, but not doubting, that however feebly advocated, it will triumph. And may He, without whose favour all human efforts are unavailing, prosper this undertaking for the benefit of the sick and the needy, and render it a blessing to future ages, and may there never be wanting kind friends and benefactors, who may perpetuate from generation to generation the benefits of so noble an institution, so long as any suffering fellow creature requires its aid.

Huddersfield, August 7th, 1840.

EXTRACTS FROM THE
LETTERS ALLUDED TO IN PAGE 15.

Margate Royal Sea Bathing Infirmary,
May 15, 1840.

Sir,

I have much pleasure in replying to your letter of May 7th, and shall be happy to supply you with any further information if you think proper to ask it.

The Institution received the Royal patronage in the year 1820, hence the term General has been abandoned. I refer you to the enclosed book of our rules and regulations, and for much of the information you require. As the proceedings of 1839 are not yet published, I may as well mention here that the number of patients received were 614—of whom 290 were in-door and 324 out-door patients. From a rough calculation I made three years since, the average stay of patients in the Infirmary, is rather more than three months. Scrofulous cases are generally preferred as in-door patients: chronic disease of every variety is found among out-door patients; amongst the former glandular affections and diseases of the joints derive the greatest benefit; among the latter chronic rheumatism and skin diseases. The patients received here are not confined to those from London hospitals, and its immediate vicinity, but from all parts of England. Public hospitals, parishes, &c., are allowed to contract for so many beds per season by paying a specified sum, (i. e. the Oxford Infirmary and others). It may be considered of national importance, and I believe the only Charity of the kind in England—I have never heard of any other Sea Bathing Infirmary.

The Institution is open for the reception of patients from the second week in May, until the last week in October—and closed during the rest of the year. Since the introduction of

the iodine treatment* on a modification of Lugol's plan, in 1832, our treatment in certain stages of scrofulous diseases has been infinitely more successful than in former years. I am perhaps the most competent to judge of its effects, having been surgeon to the Institution ever since the year 1827, I can therefore compare its effects with the treatment of former years.

There is no house surgeon so called of late years, a dispenser has been appointed every season, who resides in the Infirmary and performs the duties of house surgeon if necessary, my own residence is detached from the hospital a short distance.

I omitted to state, that warm salt water, cold, douche, shower, and vapour baths, are constantly in use. Douche baths, warm and cold, are especially useful in chronic contractions, rheumatism, spine diseases, &c., &c., and certainly might be used with great effect in our hospitals, sea water not being of indispensable importance.

I have only to repeat that I shall be happy to give you any further information you may require, and have

The honour to remain, Sir,

Yours very obediently,

WILLIAM OLIVER CHALK,
Resident Surgeon.

From Dr. Canham, Senior Physician to the Margate Sea Bathing Infirmary.

Sir,

In your letter respecting the Margate Sea Bathing Margate. Infirmary you ask, how is it that your Infirmary is large enough for Middlesex and the adjacent counties? In answer I have merely to state that if it were three times the size, I believe it would be constantly full—the applications far, very far, exceeding the admissions.

I do not know the amount of last year's Annual Subscription, a report will be published next month when I can send you one, from which you can probably learn it; or Mr. Gibb's, the treasurer, can give you the best information upon all financial matters relating to the Infirmary.

* By Dr. Canham.

Last year's expenditure about the same as 1838, viz. a little more than £2,000.

When I send you the annual report you will see the number of in and out patients.

We have 204 beds, and the annual expenditure is rather more than £2,000.

The £604 which is expended in salaries, provides payment of a house surgeon—dispenser—secretary—house steward—matron—and 21 servants and nurses.

In regard to the proportionate number of children—we generally have about one-fourth of the in-patients children.

The unions contracting for beds were Walworth, St. Pancras, City of London, Chipping Barnet, West Ham, and St. Saviour's. Hospitals—London, St. Bartholomew's, and St. George's. The Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford, paid £600 for the privilege of six beds.

The rate paid by parishes for beds is £5 per season.

I know of no objection to such institutions except the expense.

I do not find cases of phthisis reap benefit, perhaps rather the reverse, which may in some measure be attributable to the exposed situation of the building, and the constant ventilation necessary for the other patients. The cases which derive most benefit are cutaneous scrofulous affections, and affections of the joints, particularly in young subjects.

The out-patients receive medicines, medical advice, and baths, gratuitously.

The building has been erected by degrees, supposed to have cost altogether from £9,000 to £10,000.

The majority of cases are surgical.

The expenditure (1838) exceeded £2,000 for the six months—the number of patients in the house never exceeding 220.

In the year 1839, the expenditure exceeded £2,300.

The steward calculates the cost of each patient to average about £4, provisions are probably dearer in this neighbourhood than in the north, and the allowance liberal.

I am informed that £1,183 is about an average sum received for board from parishes and patients.

I shall always be ready to supply any information in my power, but as I said before, the treasurer can give you the best information upon all matters of finance, and that, in starting an establishment of this nature is the most important.

I remain,

Very truly yours,

JOS. CANHAM.

DR. R. PHILLIPPS JONES, Physician to the Chester ^{Chester.} Infirmary, says, "So far as my own opinion will carry me, I know of no Charity, which presents itself as favourable to the notice and attention of the public, as a Sea Bathing Infirmary, I have the satisfaction to say that wherever I have mentioned the Charity, the object of it has been well received."

DR. CUMMINGS, Physician to the Denbigh Infirmary, ^{North Wales.} *inter alia*, says, "I cordially approve of your suggestion, (of establishing a Sea Bathing Infirmary for the manufacturing communities of Lancashire and Yorkshire). Scrofula, as with you, forms the substratum of nearly all our surgical cases, and we are in the constant habit of recommending patients to the coast for the benefit of sea air and bathing, so that taking for granted your scheme embraces the principle of honorary subscribers, having the power to recommend patients at seven shillings or so per week, I am willing to hope that you would not refuse patients from Denbigh. In reference to the locality of your proposed Infirmary, I am decidedly in favour of Crosby or Southport. New Brighton is very exposed, the land dear, and comparatively difficult of access. At Crosby or Southport, land may be had upon reasonable terms, and I am strongly tempted to express a hope that you will aim at the plan of a large, simple, and quadrangular building, instead of a regular and expensive structure, &c. You need not fear the dilution of the sea water at Crosby, for if my memory does not fail me, the late Dr. Currie, in his medical reports, states that the water at the Pier Head, Liverpool, afforded the same quantity of saline ingredients as that taken up at the Rocks, or nearly

opposite to Crosby." The Dr. concludes by submitting a sketch of a Sea Bathing Infirmary calculated to hold 300 patients, with a minute description of its various parts, which seem admirably contrived to meet every exigence, and is well adapted to an exposed coast. For obvious reasons, however, its introduction would be premature in this place, but will form a very useful subject of consideration at a more advanced stage of the proceedings.

Liver-
pool.

DR. W. H. DUNCAN, of Liverpool, who lately gave much valuable evidence before Mr. Slaney's parliamentary committee, on the health of large towns, expresses himself on the subject as follows, "I can have no doubt that a Sea Bathing Infirmary on the western coast would be of the greatest advantage to the scrofulous poor of the populous inland manufacturing districts. To the poor of Liverpool I believe, it would be less advantageous for several reasons. 1st. Because the proportion of scrofulous cases likely to derive benefit from sea bathing, is, I think, less with us, than with you. And 2nd. Because the town-council are about to erect baths for the use of the poor of Liverpool. But to the inhabitants of the densely peopled manufacturing districts, such an institution as the one you mention, *must be of the first importance*, and you deserve the thanks of the public for your philanthropic efforts to establish it. I agree with you in thinking that the western coast is in every respect, financial and otherwise, a better locality than the eastern; but I am sorry to say I cannot give you any satisfactory information as to the comparative advantages and disadvantages of the different sites, which have been suggested. We have so little intercourse even with Southport, that I have not been able to procure any details on the subject, which it would be worth while to forward to you. My own impression, I confess, is in favour of Crosby, although even among practitioners here, I find a considerable difference of opinion on the subject. The shore at Crosby is well adapted for bathing, the sea water is sufficiently free from dilution, it is of easy access from the manufacturing districts, and has all

the advantages of being near a large town, at the same time that it is completely in the country and surrounded with the purest air. The quality of the air, I imagine, is an object to be kept in view, quite as much as that of the water. The only objection that I know to Crosby, is that it is rather exposed to the north-west, the quarter from which our prevailing winds blow, but whether this objection is peculiar to Crosby, or applies to it with greater force than to the other proposed sites, I cannot say. The village or town of Southport is protected, I believe, by sandhills, which intervene between it and the sea, but the shore itself is equally exposed with Crosby. Some parts of the Cheshire coast would be less exposed, but they would be quite ineligible in other respects. In a financial point of view, I should think Crosby would have advantages. It would be more likely to meet with support from Liverpool, for even should public baths for the poor be erected here, many patients might be sent to the Sea Bathing Infirmary for the benefit of the air, and it might be used as a convalescent hospital, a most desirable kind of establishment in the neighbourhood of all large towns. I was told by a friend of mine resident near Crosby, that he thought he knew parties, who would be willing to give land for the purpose, in the event of Crosby being fixed upon. Each of the other situations no doubt will have its peculiar advantages, and it will be for you, when in possession of the pros and cons in each case, to decide between the contending claimants."

The late Dr. Brandreth, of Liverpool, styled Southport the Montpelier of England, and another highly esteemed practitioner of the same town, Mr. Allanson, who was accustomed to recommend patients to repair to Southport for the recovery of their health, gives a similar testimony in its favour.

The following are the sentiments of DR. BARDSLEY, Jun., one of the Physicians of the Manchester Infirmary, "I have ^{Manchester.} long felt the necessity of some public Sea Bathing Infirmary of the poorer classes of society; and I shall be truly rejoiced, if your wise and benevolent intention can be brought into

practical operation. Some ten years ago, I kept an accurate statistical register of the cases admitted under my care at the Royal Infirmary in the three classes of in, out, and home patients : and from a careful examination of the same, I find that the proportion of scrofulous cases forms one-fourth of the whole entered upon the books of the Institution. I cannot answer for the views of the Managing Board of the Infirmary, with regard to the probable amount of subscription, which they might be induced to afford towards the proposed Sea Bathing Establishment , but, I quite agree with you, that the annual subscription of eight guineas, already advanced to the Southport Strangers' Society, is much too small in order to meet the demands of the patients of the Infirmary—and according to the present rule this *subscription is only available to in-patients*, so that the very numerous class of out and home patients derive no benefit from this subscription. I am quite sure that the Charity would be at less expense from an annual subscription of £50 for the purposes of a Sea Bathing Infirmary, than from allowing patients labouring under scrofula, and its various modifications, to remain on the books during the whole of the summer months, and to be consuming weekly quantities of medicine at a considerable expense, and with only partial benefit to themselves. I have been frequently surprised to see the change in the condition of scrofulous patients, who have been under my care at the Infirmary for many months, on their return from Southport; for they have seemed to derive more advantage from three weeks enjoyment of the advantages of sea air and bathing, than from a course of medicine carefully and judiciously adopted for months previously. All that you want is money, for without it, no institution can either be formed, or what is more important, be permanently supported. I shall be glad to promote in any way, the success of your excellent undertaking, and I trust your efforts will be successful. I have only one suggestion to offer, which regards the place selected for the proposed establishment—would not the Cheshire coast be preferable,

embracing Liverpool, and admitting, as it does, a favourable railway communication."

DR. GERVASE ALEXANDER, late of Rochdale, now ^{Roch-}_{dale.} Physician to the Children's Dispensary, Manchester, states that during a sojourn of eleven years at Rochdale, out of 10,000 poor, one half at least were labouring under struma ; and adds, I have no doubt but the large towns of this county will emulate the noble spirit evinced by Huddersfield, &c.

From Dr. Norris, of Preston.

Sir,

I did not like to address you until I could satisfactorily ^{Preston.} answer all your enquiries. I have lately visited Southport, Lytham, and Blackpool; and endeavoured to procure every information respecting the subject in which you take so great an interest. The only Charity by which the benefit of sea air and bathing can be procured for the sick poor, is the Southport Strangers' Charity ; the rules of which I enclose.

On perusal you will observe that each annual subscriber of £1 may recommend a patient—who is not admitted into an infirmary, but receives from the Charity one shilling a-day for three weeks for his maintenance, and has also baths and medicines from the same. Small as are the means of this Institution, still it has conferred great benefit upon many, to whom the best treatment at home has been of but little service.

The subscription for 1839, seems to have been £474 and odd, and raised from a few individuals and mercantile firms, but the Charity is not well supported by the inhabitants ; who, I have been informed, are fearful that strangers may dislike the place, if they constantly meet in the streets the sick and lame.

But an Infirmary would not be open to the same objection. The building might be erected near to, but not in the town ; and the patients only permitted to take exercise within certain limits. The patients would also be better fed, and more strictly attended to than at present, and I do not think there would be much difficulty in getting a sufficiently large annual subscription for its support.

With regard to Lytham and Blackpool, at neither are there any public baths or institutions, consequently no register of cases has been kept at either.

From my own experience I think Southport the most desirable place of the three for an Infirmary ; as the town is built upon sand and surrounded and sheltered by sandhills, the air is considerably milder. I have known many cases of spasmodic asthma, the paroxysms of which have been much more frequent and severe at Lytham and Blackpool, to derive great and immediate benefit from Southport. Excepting in Spring, Lytham is very hot and close—and Blackpool is so high and exposed that few can bear it before Autumn.

I beg to assure you that I consider your endeavours with regard to this subject deserving of the thanks, not only of the public, but of the profession, and I for one shall rejoice to hear that such an institution has been established.

Believe me, Sir,

Yours most respectfully,

J. H. NORRIS.

The following resolutions were passed unanimously, at a Meeting of the Medical Men of Blackburn, held at the Hotel, July 13th, 1840.

Black-
burn.

Resolved—That the present meeting fully concurs with Dr. Walker, as to the propriety of a Marine Establishment on the western Coast ; believing with Dr. Walker, that a very considerable proportion of cases would be greatly benefited by sea air or sea bathing.

Resolved—That this meeting pledges itself to use its influence in co-operation with the profession in Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire, for the promotion of the above object.

Resolved further—That this meeting is anxious to express its opinion that the most eligible site for such an establishment as the above will be found in Blackpool or its vicinity.

JOHN CORT, Chairman.

The following is from Mr. Longton, Senior Medical Officer of that excellent Institution, the Southport Strangers' Charity.

I have herewith sent you the three last years' reports, which ^{South.} will answer most of your questions. The patients come from ^{port.} places near the residence of the subscriber that sends them.

The character and description of cases are scrofula, rheumatism, disordered digestion, and chronic complaints of all sorts; medical treatment is superadded when necessary; no register of cases is kept, as the patient can only remain on the books three weeks upon *one* recommendation—no regular plan of treatment can be adopted in chronic cases. The cases most benefited are scrofula, rheumatism, and disordered digestion.

Should you wish for any other information which you do not find in the reports, I shall be very happy to give it you.

Letter of Dr. Turner, one of the Physicians of the Stockport Infirmary.

The medical officers of the Stockport Infirmary, beg to ac- ^{Stock-} ^{port.} knowledge the receipt of Dr. Walker's communication respecting the establishment of a Sea Bathing Infirmary, and also to express their entire concurrence and approval of the proposed object. In the present stage of the undertaking they are not able to pledge themselves to any precise amount of pecuniary contribution—but they have laid his proposals before the monthly board, and they have taken steps to bring the subject before the public, and those of our subscribers who are the most likely to patronize the intended measure.

Bolton-le-Moor, July 27th, 1840.

Sir,

A Meeting of the Honorary Surgeons of the Bolton Dis- ^{Bolton-} ^{le-Moor.} pensary was held in the Medical Library, at the Dispensary, this Evening; to take into consideration the subject of your Letter, and as Chairman of the Meeting, I am requested to convey to you their approval of your views respecting the establishment of a *Marine Hospital* at some convenient place on the *Western Coast*; and to express their willingness to co-operate

in the establishment of the same. And in their name I beg to suggest as a preliminary step, that you should communicate with the leading practitioners and officers of Public Charities in Lancashire, Cheshire, and West Riding of Yorkshire, and so form a central and general committee who might draw up a plan in detail, and thus be better enabled to carry the objects of the Charity into effect.

I have the honour to be,

Yours respectfully,

J. M. ROBINSON.

From Dr. Bardsley, Junr., August 6th.

My dear Sir,

Man.
chester.

I have delayed replying to your note up to the present time, in order that I might communicate to you the opinion of the monthly consultation respecting the contents of your letter, which was this day laid before them. I have great pleasure in saying that the committee were unanimous in their opinion of the want of a Sea Bathing Infirmary similar to the one which you have proposed. As chairman of the meeting, I drew up a resolution, expressive of the views of the medical board on the subject, and the same, together with your letter, will be submitted to the consideration of the weekly board on Monday next. It is probable, however, that they may take a week before they arrive at a decision. I will take care to inform you of the same, so soon as the communication shall be received. In the mean time, I have desired Mr. Holland, the house apothecary, to forward you the resolution. I still hope that your benevolent intentions will meet with that encouragement to which they are so justly entitled. On a future occasion, I will offer two or three suggestions on the best mode of obtaining subscriptions for the proposed institution.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Yours truly,

J. L. BARDSLEY.

Resolution passed at a Medical consultation, at the Royal Infirmary, on 6th August, 1840. Dr. J. L. Bardsley in the Chair.

“ Proposed by Mr. Thorpe, and seconded by Dr. Davenport, ^{Manchester.} Hulme, and carried unanimously.”

“ That the Medical Committee in their warm approval of Dr. Walker’s benevolent suggestions respecting the establishment of a Sea Bathing Infirmary, from a full conviction of the many advantages that would result to a numerous class of the patients of this Infirmary from such an Institution, beg to direct the attention of the weekly board to Dr. Walker’s letter, with a view of taking into consideration the propriety of contributing from the funds of the Infirmary, a certain annual sum towards the support of the proposed Sea bathing Infirmary.

From Thos. Turner, Esq. Surgeon to the Manchester Royal Infirmary.

I fear you will accuse me of great negligence and unkindness ^{Manchester.} in not replying to your letter ere this, but I was anxious before doing so, to be able to communicate to you the result of a Meeting of the Physicians and Surgeons of the Manchester Infirmary held yesterday. Every one present concurred in the benevolence and usefulness of your project, and we did not hesitate to recommend to the board, that the Trustees of the Manchester Infirmary, should give their assistance to it, which we trust will be the case, and I am sure the Profession of Manchester will do all in their power to promote its success.

I think it likely that the committee of the board will be willing to offer an annual sum towards the support of the projected Institution, and I think more than this may ultimately be done for it. Rest assured, my dear sir, I will do my best for you, and I hope the profession here will co-operate in promoting an object which has the strongest claims on the benevolence and beneficence of the public.

DR. FAVELL, one of the Physicians of the Sheffield Infirmary, ^{Sheffield.} to whom I am peculiarly indebted for his able advocacy and support on this occasion, in a series of letters he has given

to the public, in which he refers to the variety of cases most likely to be benefited by such an institution, and among other observation has the following.—“ One of my surgical colleagues states, that the scrofulous cases average four in six of the in patients under his care. Scrofulous affections of the joints, indeed, are exceedingly prevalent. With respect to the prevalence of chronic rheumatism, I shall only add that the aggregate of medical cases, which I have admitted at the Infirmary during the present year, since January 18th, amounts to 296, of which more than sixteen per cent are cases of chronic rheumatism. The admissions of my colleagues do not, I believe, materially differ from my own ; and I have good reason for stating that the proportion of those admitted at the Dispensary, is about the same. It appears then, that chronic rheumatism prevails very extensively amongst the labouring classes—and what, let me ask, is the most efficient remedy ? I do not hesitate to reply a course of warm bathing—our local baths are in such cases, valuable—the waters of Buxton, from their saline impregnation are more valuable still ; and there can be no doubt, *that warm sea bathing would be far more beneficial than either.* A Sea Bathing Infirmary, to which a majority of these cases might be transferred, would save the poor people weeks, if not months, of suffering, and our public charities, a serious annual expenditure. The wealthier part of the community may judge of the correctness of this statement by their own experience, many of them having derived greater benefit from a week or two at Buxton or the sea coast, than they had previously done from long continued treatment. In fact, there is a stage in complaints of this kind, when medicine ceases to be of service—when the only hope of amendment is in a removal to some other place, where a more salubrious atmosphere, and a course of bathing may be together enjoyed. There is yet another class of cases to which I must briefly allude, those in which there is no palpable organic disease, but where the different functions are oppressed and labouring —the flush of health has left the cheek—the arm no longer possesses its accustomed strength—the mind has lost its elas-

ticity—weakness and depression are all the complaints we have—weariness and languor are the experience of each day—their very amusements cease to be attractive—night finds them feeble and exhausted, and morning unrefreshed. Cases of this description are of daily occurrence. They are met with among all classes of society, but to a fearful extent amongst the poor. What causes this exhaustion of nervous energy amongst them? Over exertion—unwholesome diet—and a vitiated atmosphere. There are scores of families in this town, who do not get sufficient food to satisfy the demands of nature, and there are scores more, whose diet, although it may be plentiful, is not calculated to yield the requisite degree of nourishment. Moreover the houses of the poor are badly ventilated, no attention is paid to this most important process in their construction, and they are frequently crowded together in small yards and alleys. Now what is the necessary consequence of such a state of things? That the health of these parties gradually becomes undermined, and we then have them applying in large numbers, for relief at the Infirmary, the Dispensary, and the Workhouse. They are alike broken down in health and spirit, and vainly expect that medicine will restore them. I have no hesitation in asserting, that in a majority of these cases more benefit would result from residing a few weeks in an Infirmary situated on the sea coast, than from medical attendance for an equal number of months in an inland hospital. Nay more, many of these cases resist all kinds of treatment, till recourse is had to change of air—the air of the sea coast. I cannot for a moment believe that the people of Sheffield, seeing that the poor in the midst of them are subject to a variety of diseases, which absolutely require the benefit of sea bathing—that they are not able to procure it for themselves, and that it may be furnished at a comparatively trifling expense, in short, that the establishment of a Sea Bathing Infirmary is exceedingly desirable and very practicable, will remain indifferent to this important undertaking."

And he remarks as follows, in reply to my preceding letter,

"A Sea Bathing Infirmary at Scarborough is *very good as far as it goes, but it is totally inadequate to the wants of the West Riding.* There are more patients actually requiring admission into some such establishment, on the books of our Infirmary at present, than would fill the Scarborough hospital. We must have an Institution on a much larger scale, and in my opinion it ought to be situated on the western coast."

According to my promise I send you word what we have done at our Infirmary meeting this morning. The following resolution was passed :—"That the project of establishing a Sea Bathing Infirmary for the sick poor is a very laudable one, and deserves the cordial approbation of this meeting; that such an institution would be most advantageously situated for the poor, on the western coast; that a large proportion of the cases admitted at this Infirmary are of such a nature as would be greatly benefited by sea bathing; that it would be a great relief to this Charity to have the opportunity of transmitting these cases to the coast, and that therefore it is desirable to request the Governors to patronise by subscribing towards the establishment of the projected Sea Bathing Infirmary." It was agreed that a copy of the foregoing resolution should be sent to the weekly board next Friday, together with the following address.

"To the Weekly Board of Governors, &c., &c.

"Gentlemen—We take the liberty of soliciting your very serious attention to a project of considerable interest and importance. At the present time an attempt is being made (and there is reason to believe it will be successful) to establish a Sea Bathing Infirmary for the sick poor, on some part of the western coast. The desirableness of such an Institution has long been felt by the medical officers connected with this Charity. It is not necessary that we should here insist on the peculiar advantages which result from sea air and sea bathing, all who have enjoyed them are to some extent acquainted with their value. But we think it right expressly to inform you that a considerable proportion of the cases annually admitted

either as in or out patients at this hospital, would be more benefited by a short residence on the sea coast, than by a protracted course of medical treatment. The cases to which we refer are not only extremely tedious, but when in the house require a more generous diet than the average of other patients —*they are therefore the most expensive cases received on the books of the Infirmary.* As medical men we most cordially approve of the projected establishment; we can appreciate its vast importance, and are anxious to secure its benefits for some of those many patients of this Charity who so greatly need them. The medical officers of the Infirmaries at Manchester and Huddersfield have already brought this subject before the Governors of those Institutions, and there is reason to believe they will subscribe liberally towards the undertaking. We have felt it to be our duty to follow the example of our brethren in other towns, by directing your attention to this interesting topic, and we have now only very respectfully to urge upon you the desirableness of subscribing for a certain number of beds annually, for the use of such poor patients as your medical officers consider to be most deserving."

A copy of the resolution will also be sent to the medical staff at the Dispensary, and to the surgeons of the Poor Law Union. I am informed that the Guardians of the Poor will most probably subscribe very liberally; £50 per annum has been mentioned.

DR. KENNY, Senior Physician to the Halifax Infirmary, Halifax. is not less decisive on the subject. "There cannot," he says, be a second opinion on the subject. It is a matter of fact, altogether indisputable, that scrofula, in its numberless and Protean forms, constitutes a most appalling proportion of the cases of disease which present themselves to our notice in this country, in our practice amongst the poor, whether in private or hospital practice. It is alike indisputable, that in the summer months, most of those cases would be infinitely more benefited by a sea-side residence, affording the advantages of a pure marine air, bathing warm or cold, as the indications

might require, and an abundant supply of fresh fish as food, than by all that the most consummate skill and experience could accomplish for them, while immured in an inland hospital. As you will easily believe, it would afford me much satisfaction to see so desirable an object as the one you now propose, carried into effect, &c. &c."

Leeds.

The sentiments of DR. HUNTER, Senior Physician to the Leeds Infirmary are not less favourable. "I am not prepared," he says, unless with greater labour than my present avocations will permit, to give you a distinct (so to speak) statistical account, which could be depended upon, of the scrofulous patients entered as in or out patients of the Infirmary, nor of the Dispensary which admits nearly an equal number—in both from 9 to 10,000 annually. This seems of less importance as there are so many other diseases benefited by sea air and bathing—and even change of air and residence alone does wonders to the population of such a town as this. You kindly ask me to favour you with my views on the subject. They are shortly these—go on and prosper—your principle is good, and it shall not want my support, however small."

Such are the authorities. I have selected from many others, all equally attesting the expediency of uniting in this scheme of christian beneficence, as one of no less utility to the poor, than of easy attainment to the more affluent members of the community. Other names I might have added, but those I have already adduced, will, I trust, carry weight enough to convince the most sceptical on this subject, and render any further appeal on my part unnecessary.

It has been suggested to me, that it may be as well to add, by way of conclusion, lest any one should urge the state of the times as unfavourable to such an enterprize, that in all similar undertakings, it has been generally customary to call for the sums subscribed by instalments, and in the present instance a similar policy would be adopted, a reasonable interval being allowed between each instalment.

The following Extract of a Letter from Dr. Kendrick, of Warrington, has been received since the preceding pages were printed.

“ I need not, I am sure, express how sincerely I wish
“ success to your undertaking, from a conviction of its great
“ importance. Perhaps there is no district in which its benefits
“ will be more felt, than that which is the sphere in which I
“ move, and I hope many, who can afford to contribute to so
“ good a work, will be found willing to do so.”

